

Photospot:

Mascarene Grey White-eye *Zosterops borbonicus* with yellow forehead

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Zostérops des Mascareignes *Zosterops borbonicus* avec un front jaune. Il est bien connu que les zostérops ou 'oiseaux-lunettes' (Zosteropidae) sont friands de nectar et que, leur bec étant relativement court, ceci provoque souvent la coloration de leur front par du pollen. Les photos reproduites ici montrent des Zostérops des Mascareignes *Zosterops borbonicus* dont le front est jaune par l'adhésion de pollen de l'arbuste *Sophora tetraptera*.

White-eyes (Zosteropidae) are well known to be fond of nectar (Fry & Keith 2000) and, their bills being relatively short, this often leads to colouring of the forehead by pollen. We observed a remarkable example of this while watching five Mascarene Grey White-eyes *Zosterops borbonicus* around the Piton de la Fournaise, Réunion, on 11 September 2003. This species, one of the commonest resident birds on the island, is normally rather drab greyish to brownish, especially on the head and the upperparts, the white rump and white 'epaulettes' being the only contrasting features (Barré *et al.* 1996). The five Mascarene Grey White-eyes at Piton de la Fournaise, however, all had bright yellow foreheads (Figs. 1–2) through

feeding on the flowers of a Kowhai *Sophora tetraptera* bush, thereby colouring the front part of their heads with yellow pollen.

Acknowledgements

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References

- Fry, C. H. & Keith, S. (eds.) 2000. *Birds of Africa*. Vol. 6. London, UK: Academic Press.
Barré, N., Barau, A. & Jouanin, C. 1996. *Oiseaux de la Réunion*. Paris: Editions du Pacifique.

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Figures 1–2. Mascarene Grey White-eye *Zosterops borbonicus* with yellow forehead in a Kowhai *Sophora tetraptera* bush, Piton de la Fournaise, Réunion, September 2003 (Jens Hering)

Zostérops des Mascareignes *Zosterops borbonicus* avec un front jaune, dans un arbuste Kowhai *Sophora tetraptera*, Piton de la Fournaise, Réunion, septembre 2003 (Jens Hering)